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THE COMMONWEAL

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

Women and Rhythm

FOR SOME decades it has been commonly recognized that the only morally permissible method of family planning open to Catholics is the "rhythm" method. Yet as many Catholic parents can attest, it does not inspire a great deal of confidence. In itself this is not surprising. There is still much that is not known about the biology of reproduction; and the whole key to a successful use of rhythm is precise knowledge. Less understandable, however, is the meager amount of scientific research conducted by Catholics toward gaining such knowledge. The little work which has been done has been mainly research carried on by individuals on their own initiative. The results are evident: not only comparatively few Catholic parents have an adequate knowledge of the rhythm method, but also those doctors to whom they turn for advice very often know little more than those who seek their help.

For this reason, the recent announcement by the Ford Foundation that Georgetown University has been awarded a grant of $150,000 to launch a center for research on population problems is welcome news. According to the Foundation announcement, "The university will direct its first studies toward the possible improvement of the rhythm method of family planning." We can only wish the center well; it is a step in the right direction.

At the same time, it seems clear that far more is needed than the establishment of one research project. It may, of course, very well be the case that the Georgetown center will achieve a major breakthrough on the rhythm method. But it is more likely that any dramatic advance will necessitate an intensified effort carried on for a number of years by a great many scientists. If such an effort is to be made, then it is Catholics themselves who will have to finance it. It is fortunate that the Ford Foundation has seen fit to make some funds available; but it is ironic, too, that the prod for such research had to come from non-Catholic sources. Catholics should be grateful; some chagrin is in order also.

Unhappily, it may be doubted that Catholics are yet aware of the urgent need for developing methods of family planning which are both moral and effective. There are many possible explanations for this lack of awareness, but perhaps the most plausible one is that only in the last decade or so have the vast changes inherent in the contemporary world caught up with Catholics. While the most dramatic changes have been those medical advances which have led to a lowering of the death rate, especially the infant-mortality rate, thus making over-population a very real problem in many nations, there have been many other no less pertinent changes.

IN THIS country, the rapid drop in the average age at which men and women marry now means that a woman can easily bear four or five children by the age of thirty—and still have anywhere from ten to fifteen fertile years left. At the same time, the rising cost of housing, the trend toward smaller houses, and the cost of education now make the raising of very large families increasingly difficult. These facts are easily noticeable—and it is both unfair and unrealistic to assume that those who, in their personal lives, find them a heavy burden are necessarily weak in their devotion to Catholic family ideals. For it is becoming increasingly apparent that the one-time ideal of a large family for every married couple would now involve the most extreme heroism (if not irresponsibility) for many couples. It is not zeal which has changed but the world.

There is still another change, possibly the one least considered by most Catholics. It is now taken for granted, among Catholics and non-Catholics alike, that women have many talents to contribute to human society—talents other than those of childbearing and child-rearing. Women also have minds; and they are increasingly being trained to use them.

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In the past, it was assumed that woman's proper role was intrinsically the "hidden" role; like other minority groups throughout history, women were told to be passive, humble, meek, and self-effacing—and to leave the important things to their natural masters. But who can sanely sustain such a myth any longer? Today, women are effectively demonstrating that they can do remarkably well in many of those "active" roles once thought appropriate only for men.

The consequences of this change are immense. For one thing, it means that the now-muttered complaint of many mothers that their education and training go to waste will have to be taken more seriously. For another, it means that Catholics will now have to give more thought to the kind of marriage preparation appropriate to women who will, after they have discharged their family obligations, have many productive years left in which to make use of their personal talents and backgrounds.

Is it too much to hope that some thought will now be given to these new realities? But can one think of them at all apart from the achievement, by a concerted Catholic effort, of a perfected rhythm method and the exploration as well of other means of family planning compatible with Catholic morality?

Thwarting Subversion

PRESIDENT Betancourt of Venezuela has every reason to advocate extreme measures against Cuba. He has survived three attempts on his life and right now a pro-Castro terrorist group seeks to undo him and sink the cause of political democracy in his country. The most damaging of its acts of sabotage was its recent destruction of valuable oil and warehouse facilities, the most spectacular its highjacking of a Venezuelan government freighter bound for Houston and New Orleans. But Rómulo Betancourt holds these and other attempts at sabotage to be commando-scale operations backed by little popular support.

It is hardly surprising that Venezuela should be the prime Communist target now in the hemisphere. Its vast oil and iron resources are of key importance to the West, and it would be handy for the Soviets to be freed from delivering Cuba's oil by a source so much nearer at hand. The government's revenues of three-quarters of a million dollars a day from oil royalties, utilized so heavily for social progress, could hardly look more tempting.

But the President expressed confidence in the stability of his regime. Venezuelan labor is solidly behind him. He finds that opposition from the Right is shrinking, with extreme conservatives in management giving way to modern businessmen. Although there is still far to go, industrialization, city and rural housing, education, and land reforms are advancing rapidly. Democratic Venezuela has a real chance of succeeding.

As President Betancourt places his chief reliance in reaching that goal on eliminating social injustice and poverty among his people, so he believes that this is the principal means of thwarting subversion in other Latin American countries—which unhappily have little to compare with his own steady oil revenues. He also believes the Organization of American States could do much more to contain Soviet-Cuban subversiveness. The O.A.S. did have a lot to do with toppling his adversary, Trujillo, but the late Dominican dictator was a Rightist, who stood alone.

Some thousand men from other countries were trained for guerrilla tactics by Castro's Cuba last year. The Latin American nations could check this by forbidding advertisements for such training to appear in their newspapers and by restricting travel by their nationals to and from Cuba. They could apply a quarantine to Cuba and join in insisting that the Soviets remove their Cuban troops, while holding the line against subversion at home. Determined resistance needs to go hand in hand with war on poverty and with a democratic social revolution. That is why the Alliance for Progress, the Peace Corps and the rest are such important instruments. Few men have been doing more than President Betancourt to show the way.

The Uninvited

UNFORTUNATE indeed is the recent controversy stirred up over the refusal by officials of Catholic University to approve four leading priest-theologians on the list of prospective speakers in a student-sponsored lecture series. The publicity which this action has received in the press may be all out of proportion to its importance. Nevertheless, the rationale offered for its action by the University's administration does seem to call for serious criticism.

It is true that the speakers in question, Fr. John Courtney Murray, Fr. Godfrey Diekmann, Fr. Gustave Weigel and Fr. Hans Kung, had not actually been invited by the students, a fact which reduces considerably the excitement raised by the headlines. At least three of the speakers, moreover, have appeared at the University several times before and can be expected there in the future. Fr. Weigel has recently lectured in several classes at the University and will be a spring commencement speaker.

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The objection raised by the administration, according to official statements, was over having all four speakers, who represent a definite, known point of view, appear there at this time. According to the Rector, Msgr. William J. McDonald and the Vice Rector, Msgr. Joseph McAllister, the University did not want to be put in the position of seeming to take sides in the ecclesiastical debate over issues raised at the Ecumenical Council in Rome.

The rub is that in its action the University has done just what it sought to avoid. It has certainly seemed to "take sides" and to lean in a direction critical of one common approach to the questions of the Church and the world. It would now be most interesting to know whom the officials did approve to speak, for it is hard to conceive of anyone concerned with the Church who does not have some "very definite point of view" with regard to the present controversies.

One of the most essential matters of controversy engaging the mind of the Church at this time is surely that of free speech in the Church. It is precisely on this very delicate and crucial matter that the University has seemed to take sides by "preferring not to have" the speakers in question. In this sense the "prudential judgment" exercised by the administration seems to have been very ill-advised indeed. The University could have taken its impartial stand quite simply by issuing a statement about the entire lecture series, saying that the views of the speakers therein did not necessarily reflect those of the faculty or administration of the University.

As it is, by what seems to have been more than merely a very imprudent decision, a potentially serious blow has been delivered to Catholic learning in America. No one is the better for it, least of all the students, who have lost a rich opportunity to see and hear four of the most brilliant and articulate theologians in the Church today.

A thorough review of the whole procedure for approving speakers at Catholic University seems to be in order. It is good to report that the Undergraduate Council has passed a unanimous recommendation that the Faculty-Student Advisory Board undertake one. It is not too late, then, to repair the damage done to a major Catholic center of learning by the unfortunate public display of unwarranted over-cautiousness on the part of University officials.

Senior Citizens

FOR MANY years now the most neglected citizens in the United States have been its senior citizens. A comprehensive and practicable approach to the problems of the elderly has been long overdue in Washington. The makings of such a plan seem to be present in President Kennedy's recent message to Congress, the first such ever devoted entirely to the problems of the elderly.

In this package is included a "hospital insurance program" which, so far as it differs (and that is not very much) from last year's ill-fated "medicare" program, is a distinct improvement. Significantly, it is no longer called "medicare" or "health insurance" and thus puts the emphasis where it belongs, namely, on providing for the inevitable hospital care which has become a prohibitive financial burden on the aged. The new plan also overcomes the chief defect of the old one in that it provides insurance for those who are not included under social security as well as for those who are. Furthermore, it offers a choice between three types of plans, which is also an improvement.

For all that, there is little chance that the new medical plan will even reach the voting stage this spring. That, however, should not deter Congress from acting on the other parts of the President's program, which include proposals concerning housing, employment and recreation for the elderly. It is about time our senior citizens came into their rightful inheritance in this republic.

HERE AND THERE

A New Breed of Cat

LAST YEAR a philosophical-minded physician, Dr. Herbert Ratner, got national attention when he claimed that America is "the most over-medicated, most over-operated, and the most over-inoculated country in the world . . . also the most anxiety-ridden country with regard to health." (Dr. Ratner, incidentally, is the director of public health in Oak Park, Ill., birthplace of the late Ernest Hemingway, our most celebrated apostle of hairy-chested vigor and the strenuous life.)

The Ratner statement was made in an interview on the American Character published by the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. Though it was a wayward thought for the director of the Center's American Character studies to have, it occurred to me when I first read the interview that we Americans may also be the most over-examined, most over-analyzed,

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and most over-studied people in the world; also the most anxiety-ridden with regard to our character.

In recent years, the body politic seems to have been perpetually stretched out on one couch or another, being probed and prodded, pinched and pricked, meted and measured by moralists, novelists, social scientists, preachers, psychiatrists, journalists, and visiting economists. Dozens of latter-day Tocquevilles have had a go at us. The more successful of these have summed up their almost universally dismal findings in catchy descriptive titles, like *The Lonely Crowd* and *The Affluent Society*, which have helped shape the image of America at home and abroad.

It is interesting in this connection to note how the myth-terms for the nation have changed over the years. Americans of an earlier era thought of themselves as New Adams and of their young nation as a second chosen people, and they proclaimed without shame that its democratic institutions represented the Last, Best Hope on Earth. But in recent years talk of Organization Men studiously engaged in Status Seeking and Waste Making has been more typical. The notion of new-world Innocence issuing from the dark womb of Europe into the fine clean light of an American day intrigued the literati of Henry James' era. But with us the terms were almost reversed. Our literati saw us as Ugly Americans, bringing with us wherever we went the vulgar materialism and tinny mass culture that marked our life at home: Coca-colonization spreading its blight from Rome to Rangoon.

Not too many years ago, we had no hesitancy about singing of America as the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave. But then, in even the most nationalistic circles, the words gained a certain archaic ring. They were applied not to the present, as an act of self-confidence, but to the past, as an act of patriotic piety. We lost our forbears' simple certainty that the description fit the living, so we attributed it to the improbable giants who once walked the American earth. And this unsureness knew no partisan or ideological barrier. The men of our Right appeared to be fully persuaded that freedom had departed from American shores and that courage, save that residue found in their own small band of holdouts, was conspicuously missing as well. Our leftists, speaking the new jargon of alienation and role-playing, appeared to be convinced that freedom had been reduced to a mere cold war slogan and that bravery had become as rare a phenomenon as Congressional opposition to the budget of the FBI. Those in the middle bought books with titles like *A Nation of Sheep*, *The Hidden Persuaders*, and *The Hucksters*, and when the present seemed too dreary and the future too foreboding found relief in the cheerful memoirs of an *Only in America*.

I have been putting all this in the past tense, in deference to a view set forth by Robert E. Fitch in the most recent of the Center's interview series on the American Character. This one is called *Religion*. For it, Donald McDonald interviewed Bishop John J. Wright of Pittsburgh, Rabbi Louis Finkelstein of the Jewish Theological Seminary, and Dr. Fitch, who is dean of the Pacific School of Religion.

A few years ago, Dean Fitch painted a bleak picture of the moral condition of the nation in *U.S. News and World Report*. Mr. McDonald asked him whether he detected any improvement today. When such a question is asked, especially of a clergyman-educator, one is fully prepared to hear that if anything the situation has worsened. Dean Fitch's reply, though, was refreshingly optimistic.

"I am disposed to say that 1960 was a turning point in this regard," he told Mr. McDonald. "I think that roughly from about the end of World War I to about 1960—that is a forty-year stretch—we had a rise of relativism, of permissiveness, of a high degree of tolerance and laxity in the field of morals. We had the breakdown of what were erroneously called 'Puritan' standards; actually they were Victorian standards. . . Now I think the moral breakdown over this forty-year period has run its course. I visit college campuses and I talk to students. I have a feeling that they are turning once again to a regard for moral law, for standards and principles."

Later, he added: "The American people have lost three or four idols—Baalim—in the last decade or two. One is the belief in Mammon, in the power of wealth to do everything. We have lost our faith in that because even though we are now a wealthy country, very affluent, it does not solve all our problems. Second, we have lost our faith in the omnipotence of science, in the belief that if you have enough technology all problems and difficulties will be solved and overcome. It has become clear that with enough technology, we can now blow ourselves to hell. A third secular faith the American people have lost is the belief that their unique and manifest destiny has been to be the new, chosen Israel of contemporary history."

Dr. Fitch went on to cite President Kennedy as representative of the shift. "It is a mood that contrasts with the existentialists who just sit back and whimper about their woes and sufferings. It is a temper that faces up to the tough problems of life and says, 'We'll take them on, we have to meet them, and we'll conduct ourselves like men.' It says that there are certain historic principles in the light of which we act. We will do our best, and that is all that can be expected of us."

THE THOUGHT of John F. Kennedy's serving as representative of a dramatic upward curve in the moral measure of the nation, it struck me, would be received coolly, if not contemptuously, not only among the moralistic rightists but in many liberal circles as well. For i

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is no secret that the left wing of his own party has never warmed up to Mr. Kennedy, nor is it ever likely to think of him as a symbol of virtue. He is, rather, considered a cold, calculating politician who lacks inner fire and the unwavering liberal commitment they find in men like Adlai Stevenson. "Nixon will have to kick his twin-brother to death," the Stevenson partisans said at Los Angeles in 1960; and many of them have not changed their minds since.

I had been having these thoughts when the current issue, the American Number, of the British weekly, the *New Statesman,* crossed my desk with an article by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., White House assistant. Schlesinger was writing on this very subject: The Kennedy Administration and the American Left. And he, too, seemed to take for granted that President Kennedy was destined to remain "that man" not only in American rightist circles, which one might expect, but far out in left field as well.

Mr. Schlesinger is a Harvard historian, so it was not surprising to find him beginning his exposition by tracing modern American liberalism to two separate streams –the pragmatic, with which he identifies himself and presumably the President; and the utopian, with which he identifies the President's liberal opponents.

The pragmatic seeks to change society from within by piecemeal, reformist techniques; the utopian seeks salvation in abrupt, revolutionary breaks with the past and sudden moral breakthroughs. For the first of these traditions Mr. Schlesinger goes back to Locke and Hume, and he finds its early American exemplars in Ben Franklin and Thomas Jefferson. The second he traces back to Protestant pietism and suggests that religious leaders like Jonathan Edwards and George Fox are representative of its adherents.

Both parties in the classic division of liberalism have their inherent weaknesses. "The pragmatists accept the temptations of responsibility—and thereby invite the risks of corruption. The utopians refuse the risks of complicity—and thereby invite the risks of irrelevance."

I tied the Fitch and the Schlesinger statements together, for if there really has been a change in the moral temper of American life since 1960, as the Dean holds, I suspect it has much to do with the ascendancy of Mr. Kennedy and his political pragmatists.

Pragmatism has been the actual operating principle of politics in every Washington regime, of course, but the present Administration has made its mark by adhering to it candidly and matching its rhetoric and style to the philosophy. There is, for example, little of Woodrow Wilson's soaring idealism in the speeches of John F. Kennedy, and the piety that reigned along the Potomac throughout the Eisenhower-Dulles era is notable for its absence. Nor can one imagine President Kennedy saying, as Mr. Truman did on a memorable occasion, that the Defense Department is guided by the principles of the Sermon on the Mount. One cannot even imagine him matching the moralistic rhetoric of Franklin D. Roosevelt's pronouncements. It is Mr. Kennedy's style to be shamelessly "political," steadfastly intellectual, coldly matter-of-fact, slow to find villains, and almost shockingly modest in his long-range expectations. If his heart ever bleeds for mankind or his knees ache from praying for guidance, he lets such inner torment remain a private matter. And Mr. Kennedy has set the style for his Administration.

This style does not go down well with the group that Arthur Schlesinger identifies as utopian liberals. The low-flying rhetoric the President usually employs simply lacks the power to inspire them. His sober intellectuality seems to strike them as an absence of imagination. Though many of them espouse upper case Pragmatism in the classroom, they frequently interpret the Administration's frank devotion to possibility rather than ideal as a failure of nerve. And, finally, the Kennedy reticence, the absence of accustomed pieties—whether religious or liberal—is seen as a coldness, a heartlessness, a shocking indifference. A true liberal should "love people" more obviously than the President does. The "party with a heart" should not draw back from wearing that heart on its sleeve.

But—and here I come back to Dean Fitch—perhaps in candidly espousing the pragmatic interpretation of liberalism and expressing it not only in substance but in its properly unheroic style and manner, the nation's present leaders have actually lifted a great burden of moral weight from the shoulders of the younger generation, however much they may have shocked the built-in sensibilities of the older ones.

We know that a great relief follows when a youth gives up the practice of a faith that has long since been lost. Perhaps a new sense of moral responsibility is born, as well. When one puts aside the familiarities of a lost faith, one may finally be ready to take on the obligations, not just the comforts, of the new.

Dean Fitch cited three deposed American idols in his interview with Donald McDonald. If he had added others, Wilsonian idealism and Eisenhower-Dulles pietism might well have been among them—and the Kennedy style and manner dramatically mark their passing. One might think that release from the liturgies and devotion they demanded and candid devotion to the pragmatism of the new dispensation, if widely diffused, would result only in crude expediency, moral irresponsibility, and the death of all ideals. It is just possible, though, that the change has had the very opposite effect on the life of the nation. The generation that Dean Fitch finds ready to take on the problems of life, to meet them, and to conduct themselves like men may in fact have a surer grasp of idealism and a more certain understanding of piety than they are usually credited with.

JOHN COGLEY

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Christians and the Bomb

WE'VE BEEN living under the shadow of the Bomb for years—in a general way since 1945, when we showed the world our latest marvel at Hiroshima; in a more particular way when the Russians let us know our secret was a secret no longer. Like most people I manage to go along from week to week with the thought of the Bomb more or less successfully buried in my subconscious. Recently, though, I was forced to think on the problem by being invited to participate in a TV panel on the subject of morality and thermonuclear weapons ("Directions '63," ABC-TV in cooperation with the National Council of Catholic Men).

The first thing one must grasp is the revolutionary nature of the technological breakthrough in weapons. We do not simply have a bomb which is two or three times as powerful as previous explosives; we have an entirely new kind of weapon. If all-out thermonuclear war were to break out, we would have to count our dead in the millions immediately; millions more would die later as a result of radioactive exposure. In such a war the world's casualty list might run to hundreds of millions, and this without calculating the genetic effect of such a war on future generations. It is hard to imagine what the world would be like after a thermonuclear war, but there is little doubt that it might well be, as one observer put it, "a world in which the living would envy the dead."

Faced with such a prospect, my immediate inclination is toward pacifism. Yet I cannot in fact accept the pacifist solution, tempting as it is. Instead I think we must do the hard intellectual work which is necessary to make the traditional doctrine on just war relevant in the thermonuclear situation.

This is something we must insist on at all costs—the relevance of morality in this matter. Here I honor the Christian pacifists; I do not share their views, but it must be admitted that they are thinking about the problem—and sometimes it seems as if they are the only ones who are. Christians cannot say that any means are just simply because the end sought is good, and that is the dilemma: how are we to preserve a just, human social order without ourselves resorting to means which are inhuman and immoral? Or, to put it another way, how can we keep the world from destroying itself, and yet avoid world domination by the Communists?

This is clearly the central politico-moral problem of our age. At the same time there has been relatively little sustained discussion of it. Perhaps Reinhold Niebuhr's point about the churches and the temptation to triviality is relevant here; it is so much easier to concentrate on the morality of cigarette smoking or suggestive movies or pornographic literature than to wrestle with the morality of nuclear weapons. Whatever th reasons, there has been little serious discussion of ther monuclear weapons in moral terms. As a result, preciou few decisions in this area have been made on the basi of sober moral judgments; by and large, policy did no determine weapons development, but weapons tech nology determined policy.

As I read the situation, things are now shifting-perhaps because of changes in technology again, bu at any rate the changes are in a healthy direction. Fo a long time we relied heavily on a policy of massiv retaliation, which meant destruction of enemy cities in an effort to deter war. At the same time we sharpl curtailed our ability to fight by more conventiona means, despite the obvious need to cope with brush-fir and guerrilla-type actions.

This was in the early days of the Eisenhower polic of a "bigger bang for a buck"—a concept that shoul have started moralists crying from the housetops bu did not. The Russians soon showed the strategic as wel as the moral bankruptcy of simply threatening to coun ter atrocity with atrocity, and we then began our pres ent moves toward an emphasis on limited wars, perhap fought with conventional weapons, operating under th shield of nuclear power.

I take this to be the significance of Secretary of De fense McNamara's recent nuclear pronouncements. H is emphasizing to the Soviet Union that we already hav the capacity to absorb a first strike and still hit back he is asking the Congress—and us—to provide a mor flexible force of strategic weapons so that we can i fact absorb the first blow and still be able to strik either Russian cities or military bases. His purpose her is clear and commendable: to tell the Soviets that w will not strike their cities if they do not hit ours. Wha Mr. McNamara wants will take more, not less, money Hence the paradox: the lover of peace today may urg that more money be spent on armaments.

Here is where the nuclear pacifist runs into the har questions he must face. The idea of all-out nuclear war fare is morally repugnant. Yet, in the world in whic we live, would unilateral disarmament help the caus of peace or make war more likely? To my mind i would make war more likely, and for that reason could not conscientiously urge it on the President an the Congress.

But if unilateral disarmament is out of the question unilateral steps toward arms limitation and control ar not, and we in the United States should not be afrai to take them. The Christian tradition is to civilize war fare, to put limits on it, and this is what we shoul be working for.

JAMES O'GAR

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De Gaulle Has Managed To Unite Left, Right and Center

The Politics of Glory

MICHAEL HARRINGTON

IN FEBRUARY, 1962, when the White House served coffee to the pickets of the Student Peace Union, the Administration probably regarded the gesture as good liberal public relations, a harmless concession to idealistic, ineffective young people. In February, 1963, President Kennedy perhaps wishes that their French equivalents were keeping a serious twenty-four hour vigil outside de Gaulle's Elysée Palace. For, curiously enough, the absence of a vital, democratic Left is one of the chief reasons that the French chief of state is able to pursue his policy against British entry into the Common Market and for an independent nuclear deterrent.

To one who arrived in Paris at the beginning of the crisis, the most striking thing about the situation is the almost total absence of internal opposition to de Gaulle's newest pursuit of grandeur. If the tough-minded General has united almost the entire Western world against his position, he has also been successful in rallying practically the entire French nation in favor of it. De Gaulle is once reported to have said, "I am the popular front." In this case, he has made his boast come true: in a nation of passionate ideological divisions, he has just about united Left, Right and Center in a common cause.

As a result, France's current stance might be altered by action from other nations. There is already talk of pressure from the five other partners of the Common Market, of a battle among those within the Treaty of Rome. But, unless things change drastically, there is little possibility that any developments in French political life will cause de Gaulle to change his course. The present crisis is not simply within the Western Alliance; it reveals the tensions of the Fifth Republic as well.

MICHAEL HARRINGTON, author of *The Other America* and a frequent contributor to The Commonweal, is now in Europe for an extended stay.

Jean-Jacques Servan Schreiber, the editor of *L'Express*, achieved a memorable definition of the new Gaullist united front shortly after the breakdown of the Common Market negotiations: "Anti-Americanism is nourished and fed by every current, from nationalism to neutralism, from the lessons of Maurras to those of Guesde, from the interests of the major European capitalists to the fervor of the neo-Marxists."

Why this curious unanimity? For the traditional Right—completely defeated in the last elections and still hostile to de Gaulle because of Algerian independence—the independent *force de frappe* and the brusque rejection of English hopes, are in the best nationalist tradition. At his press conference, de Gaulle was seen as asserting the true French interest, making Paris a power to be reckoned with, a city of the standing of Washington and Moscow. For the Gaullists themselves, the first and only principle is the eternal rectitude of the General.

After the General's now famous press conference, the deputies of the U.N.R. promptly and predictably assembled and announced that the new French position was exactly what they had wanted. But the surprising aspect of this development was the fury directed against the United States by the Gaullists. For one U.N.R. deputy, France is menaced by a "Europe patronized by American generals and General Motors, a Europe for profit"; for another, the Americans who died in the invasion of 1944 "sacrificed themselves for the victory of the United States as much as for the liberation of France."

IN MORE rational quarters, the same themes have appeared in measured tones. As one instance, articles in the influential *Le Monde* have discussed the American economic penetration of Europe. As another, the week after the Brussel's negotiations broke down, the mass

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circulation *Paris Match* reported on the purchase of Simca autos by Chrysler in a piece titled, "Simca: The arrival of the American giants." The article explained that the internal battle in the United States between Ford, G.M. and Chrysler was now being carried abroad and noted the impressive percentages of auto production controlled by American capital in Germany and Great Britain. The specter of a Europe haunted by American giants was raised.

Generally speaking, then, the political spectrum from Right to Center has supported the de Gaulle policy on grounds of French glory, or economic self-interest. But the curious, ambiguous stance of the Left is somewhat more complex and requires an analysis of its own. In most of the countries of the Western world, the Left (and here, one is talking of the non-Communist Left; the policies of the Communist pseudo-Left being exactly as predictable as those of Khrushchev or Mao) is deep within the peace movement. This has been most notably true in England where the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, the Committee of One Hundred, and the Bevanite wing of the Labor Party have kept up a furious agitation on the nuclear issue for some years. In London, the rallying cry of the Left has been precisely against an independent nuclear deterrent.

In France, there has been no similar development. From the mid-fifties on, the main preoccupation of the French Left was with the Algerian war. It was *the* issue, and it lasted through independence and the campaign against the O.A.S. up until de Gaulle's electoral sweep of last fall. In this context, the General's dogged insistence on developing his own nuclear arsenal was a secondary matter. The British Left was marching from Aldermaston to Piccadilly in order to protest The Bomb; the French Left was in solemn cortege in the streets of Paris demanding an end to war and terrorism.

In addition, the French Left has a long tradition of anti-Americanism. This has played a peculiar role in the debate over nuclear weapons. So it is that an article in *France-Observateur* (which is, along with *L'Express*, a weekly center of the Left) notes that the Kennedy armament policy and the Nassau agreement are but the corollary of the American attempt to take over Europe economically, and it adds that "if Europe renounces the independent creation of a nuclear deterrent, it will condemn itself to technical under-development."

This advocacy on the Left of atomic weapons, so strange in terms of the Anglo-American experience, has its parallels in the reaction to the Common Market issue. Given the determined hostility of the Left to the regime of "personal power" it is impossible for them to come out in full support of the General's lonely, grandiloquent action. But in all of the analyses of the situation, the theme of the menace of American economic power persists. On this count, there is less assertiveness than in some of the articles on the independent nuclear deterrent; but more than a little ambiguity. That old slogan of the avant garde, *pour épater les bourgeois*, has been given a little more precision: *pour épater les bourgeois Americains*, and if necessary in concert with the French bourgeois.

FORTUNATELY, this dreary description fits only part of the French Left. Writers like Sevan-Schreiber and Claude Bourdet have taken some of the old slogans apart with great lucidity. For the editorialist of *L'Express*, the overwhelming priority of the hour is the negotiation of a nuclear disarmament agreement between Russia and the United States. As he puts it: "The priority today is to favor, by all possible means, an accord between Washington and Moscow. A policy which furthers this aim is progressive; one which retards it is reactionary. Such is the law. It is simple and unequivocal."

Possibly these counsels of reason will prevail. For now, it is necessary to number a good section of the French Left in that most curious of united fronts, the common movement of nationalists, capitalists and socialists against the United States of America and for a French Bomb. And one of America's problems in dealing with the situation is that de Gaulle has been given a free hand by the institutions of French society. The General will not have to send coffee to peace pickets this freezing winter.

The support given to de Gaulle in this crisis by the French nation reveals another important aspect of political life: the almost complete absence of any organized opposition to the General. When de Gaulle first came to power, there were many in the United States who welcomed the end of the parliamentary squabbling of the Fourth Republic and the appearance of a decisive man of action under the banner of the Fifth Republic. A curious exaltation of will-power was involved. It did not matter that de Gaulle was given his preeminence by quasi-insurrection, that he came to rule in the name of *Algérie Française* and stayed to preside over independence, or that in many areas he carried out a political program which was the exact opposite of the one championed by his most ardent supporters. All of these contradictions were put aside and subordinated to a single thought: de Gaulle acts.

In the years since he came to power in 1958, much of what the General has done has seemed to bear out this foreign support of French guided democracy. The economy, within the Common Market, boomed (it was easy to forget that de Gaulle was originally an opponent of the Common Market); the Algerian peace was achieved; the Army was put in its place; the old political parties, the old faces of the Fourth Republic, were vanquished; and the public buildings in the lovely

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center of Paris were, for the first time in very many years, cleaned.

However, there has been an enormous price paid for this decisiveness: the enfeeblement of almost all of the democratic institutions in France. Too many political parties is a curse—but so are too few. And after the elections of 1962, there existed in France only two institutions of serious support and power: the Gaullist U.N.R. united on a program no more specific than support of the General; the French Communist Party, the most rigid and reluctantly anti-Stalinist Communist Party to be found in the Western world. The old Rightist parties were wiped out. The Radicals, a classic source of governments under the Fourth Republic, were reduced to impotence. The Socialists of Guy Mollet made a fairly decent showing on paper, i.e. in the number of deputies elected, but this was due in some measure to massive Communist support on the second ballot. In terms of real political support and effectiveness, there remained the Gaullists and the Communists.

In a fairly candid article in *France-Observateur,* Giles Martinet (one of its editors), spoke simply of "the sick Left." The Gaullists, he noted, had achieved tremendous success with the "new strata" of French society (young farmers, Catholic workers, etc.); the Left had not. There was a tendency to retreat into slogans and old affirmations; the first attempts to formulate a new policy had been checked. Martinet's point applies most painfully to the coming Presidential elections of 1965. The Left has no figure, no candidate, no real institution. The Gaullists have de Gaulle. How does one develop a political perspective in such a situation?

IN A SENSE, then, even if the French Left did have a serious alternative program to the de Gaulle grand design of a nuclear deterrent and a continental Europe, it probably would be unable to act upon it. As it now stands, the voices of reason, above all those which speak of the imperative of a France forwarding atomic disarmament in the world, express the thoughts and anguish of individuals, but not the possibility of serious internal change in French political life. Under such conditions, the crisis of Europe and disarmament created by the General will probably continue to be a permanent feature of international political life.

Finally, it is important for Americans to understand that the quasi-unanimity of French opinion behind de Gaulle is not frivolous. It is easy, and necessary, to subject some of the simple slogans of Left, Right and Center to a corrosive analysis. It is crucial that the blow which de Gaulle has struck against nuclear disarmament be thought of as a tragic act. But, at the same time, there must be a recognition of the substance of some of the French objections to U.S. policy.

Reading the first American reactions to de Gaulle's announcement was a disquieting experience. Translated into French in the columns of the responsible Paris press, the original English words had a sound of pique, truculence and assertiveness which hardly promoted a change in the situation here. Senator Fulbright, for example, remarked that de Gaulle was acting like Napoleon, an epithet which might have force in Arkansas or even New York, but which sounds bizarre in a nation which has considerable reverence for the first Emperor of the French. James Reston in the N. Y. *Times* indicated that America might be out of patience with Paris. (Reston, and others have since toned down this attitude considerably.) All in all, the first reactions, including the President's press conference had the sound of a great metropolitan power which was out of sorts with a client state.

There has been a response in kind in Paris. Various papers and journals have been resurrecting some choice de Gaulle anecdotes: the time he told the British in 1945 that he would like to go to war with them over the issue of Syria; the time he defied SHAEF and captured Strasbourg in direct violation of military orders; and so on. On this level, issues of enormous historic moment have been reduced to the dimensions of childish argument about whose father is stronger.

MOREOVER, the French fear of American economic domination of Europe has solid foundations in fact. For example, when *Paris Match* was discussing the battle of the American automobile giants, it noted an interesting difference between the economies of France and the United States. In the United States, it explained, it was possible for Chrysler, in the name of efficiency, to fire 7,000 workers. In France, where the auto industry is considered to be a prime and crucial index of the well-being of the society as a whole, such economies would be infinitely more difficult to undertake. And, the article continues, if the whole thing gets really sticky, General de Gaulle will not hesitate to utilize the weapon of nationalizing industry in this struggle against American automobile penetration.

On the economic plane, this means that some of the more optimistic assumptions about the way in which the Common Market had liquidated centuries of national competition have to be re-examined. The Market is not a *deus ex machina:* it could be a place for American capital to flee American wages; it could be the center of a new, larger nationalism on a continental scale; it could offer the possibility of real social progress. In this light, some of the proposals made by the United Automobile Workers calling for restrictions on American money and insisting that European workers share in the productivity gains of foreign capital should be taken off the shelf and carefully examined.

But the most essential question is political and has to do with the question of disarmament. As long as the Cold War continues to escalate, as long as revolu-

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tionary weapons systems continue to proliferate, the de Gaulle reaction on this issue will be understandable. No nation at this point in history wants to face a war with its fate dependent upon the will of a foreign power, no matter how friendly. However, there is a possibility of breaking this vicious circle. If the arms race would, on however small an issue, reverse its direction, if the present hopeful signs of an agreement between the United States and Russia were to come to fruition, then a powerful case could be made in terms of the national self-interest of France, or of any other country, that disarmament was the best defense.

In a sense, this reverses the paradox with which this article began; John F. Kennedy needs a peace movement, not only in Paris, but in Washington as well. As long as he doesn't have one, as long as the prospect is for a continuation of the arms race, the de Gaulle logic has a certain grim and grisly consistency (for de Gaulle and the French, that is; not for this writer who believes that any expansion of nuclear systems today is a crime against humanity, whether it is undertaken in Paris, Moscow—or Washington).

Clearly, in an article like this it is impossible to even begin to sketch out alternatives. But the main point should be clear: however much Gallic opaqueness may be mixed up in the present crisis, and it is considerable, the French reaction cannot be treated as a tantrum or a whim. De Gaulle has found deep, thorough-going support for his position in almost every area of French society. That should be enough to discount the theory that one is simply faced with political irascibility.

The major issues in this crisis will take a long time to work out. The Russians, with their Chinese, must be delighted that the Americans have their French. But, in any case, the impression which is probably most striking in Paris is that of the most curious united front in political history, a movement of the capitalists and the anti-capitalists, of the Left and the Right, against the domination of the United States of America. And the movement's name is Charles de Gaulle.

Novels of Terror

Nuclear Age Parables

PHILIP DEASY

FOR MANY weeks now, among the top best sellers in fiction have been Eugene Burdick and Harvey Wheeler's *Fail-Safe* and Fletcher Knebel and Charles Bailey's *Seven Days in May*. For the few who still may not know, the first is a story of how a nuclear bombing of Moscow by American airmen results after an accident in our safety system. By way of showing good faith and proving to Chairman Khrushchev that the bombing was an accident, President Kennedy orders four megaton bombs to be exploded over New York City. The time of the story is 1967. The second novel has to do with seven days of crisis precipitated by the attempt of a military junta to take over control of the American government after the President has signed a disarmament treaty with Russia. The President's counter-action saves the country and the cause of constitutional government. The time of this story is 1972.

The current runaway success of the two novels might seem to warrant the literary importance attributed to them and to two others of their kind by Max Lerner, the New York *Post* columnist. In a piece written just before the newspaper strike, and entitled "Overkil Tale," Mr. Lerner wonders whether in these stories we have not evidence of a new dimension in fiction writ ing, the beginnings, in fact, of what he calls "a new literary genre." It is because, he states, that he "ha not seen this new genre defined anywhere," that he i "taking a crack" in the column "at outlining its nature and boundaries." It might be added that Mr. Lerner's own concern about the overkill possibilities of ou nuclear age has been cogently expressed in his recently published non-fictional exposition, *The Age of Over kill*. This may, in part, explain his unabashed enthusi asm for overkill fiction.

He goes too far, however, in calling such fiction a harbinger of a new literary genre. In the history of th English novel the overkill tale has a fairly respectabl ancestor: the Novel of Terror, or more conventionally the Gothic Romance. This was a product of the lat eighteenth century both in England and America, pos sibly as an understandable reaction to the tedium o the clean and well-lighted Age of Reason. Melancholy and fear were primitive emotions that could hardly b rationalized out of existence. A properly sophisticate and learned view of the Terror Novel is provided in a

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article in the current issue of *The Yale Review* (Winter, 1963), "Night Thoughts on the Gothic Novel," by Lowry Nelson, Jr. Mr. Nelson hesitates to ascribe the rise of this horror fiction to any particular cause, though he admits that it is tempting "to suppose that once God had been secularized out of the graveyard and terrifying manifestations of nature, what remained was the primeval horror of demonic violence and bodily decay." Carrying his treatment of the genre into the mid-nineteenth century, he shows how Heathcliff of *Wuthering Heights* and Ahab of *Moby Dick* are the gothic hero's heirs. He might, of course, have continued on into Faulkner, our own twentieth century's best representative of the gothic.

ALL FOUR of the stories Mr. Lerner discusses in his column (these include, beside *Fail-Safe* and *Seven Days,* Ian Stuart's *The Satan Bug* and Henry Brinton's *Purple-6*) aim at terrifying the reader by arousing, directly or indirectly, fear of mass destruction. At least to that extent, the overkill tale is the Novel of Terror proper to our time. For a more direct comparison, however, attention may be called to Mr. Nelson's close reading of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein.* After all, The Bomb is our current monster, modern man's supreme machine creation. In *Fail-Safe (McGraw-Hill. $4.95),* Khrushchev tells Kennedy in their telephone exchange, "One thing I can say: at some point in the last ten years we went beyond rationality in politics. We became prisoners of our machines. . . ." Kennedy agrees: "It's as if human beings had evaporated, and their places were taken by computers." The parallel between that and *Frankenstein* is obvious. All that is lacking is a literary artist of Mrs. Shelley's stature. *Frankenstein,* as Mr. Nelson impressively demonstrates, can be discussed in terms of fictional art, and, in particular, in terms of "characters taking on the full symbolic resonance of inner psychological reality."

Nothing of the sort can be said about the output of Messrs. Burdick, Wheeler, Knebel, Bailey, and others of their school. In his now famous attack of a year ago, F. R. Leavis said of the fiction of C. P. Snow that "as novels they don't even begin to exist." This was an unfair judgment on Sir Charles' achievement. As a judgment on the work of Mr. Lerner's overkill tale tellers, however, it would be an understatement. The characters in these stories, to paraphrase Graham Greene, are merely cardboard figures in a paper-thin world. The prose is flat, cliché-ridden journalese. The dialogue ranges from tape-recording banalities to the stilted phony intellectuality of arguments about war and peace. There is not a vestige of "felt life." Nothing is realized, that is, made real. The over-all impression is that of something faked and one's reaction is like that of Jake Barnes in *The Sun Also Rises* to the bullfighters who "simulated danger in order to give a fake emotional feeling." The world of the overkill tale, in short, is strictly the world of non-art and on a lower level, even, than that of *Catch-22* and *The Thin Red Line.*

The Satan Bug (*Scribner's. $3.95.*) and *Purple-6* (*Nelson, Foster & Scott. $3.25.*) by English authors, can be dismissed as mere entertainments, the poor man's Instant *Walpurgisnacht.* But they pretend to be nothing else. "The Bug" is an extremely refined powder, "a saltspoon of which in ten days would kill all life in England." The villain of the story is a character right out of "The Untouchables," an American gangster named Scarlatti, who impersonates an Italian scientist named Dr. Gregori. He steals the bug ("They should not have laughed at Enzo Scarlatti") and threatens to spill it over London so that when the city is evacuated his men can freely rob the banks. At the end, when he goes to his death, he has a nostalgic curtain line, "But it would have been nice to see what they would have said in the New York *Times.*" (Los Angeles edition, no doubt.) *Purple-6* is just papier-mâché Snow, which is to say preposterously bad. In one dramatic scene the protagonist asks a fellow scientist, "Do you think I'm made of sawdust?" Any adult reader (if he had the patience, that is, to read to p. 178) could answer that one.

THE ENGLISH overkill tales can be dismissed but the American tales can't. They do pretend to be something other than entertainments. They pretend to be the truth. The authors of *Fail-Safe* make unequivocal statements in their preface: "Men, machines, and mathematics being what they are, this is, unfortunately, a 'true' story. The accident may not occur in the way we describe but the laws of probability assure us that ultimately it will occur." Subsequently, in a phone exchange with Norman Cousins of *The Saturday Review,* Mr. Burdick stated, "I believe it [the kind of accident described in *Fail-Safe*] to be inevitable under the present circumstances. This is something people ought to know."

Messrs. Knebel and Bailey have no preface to *Seven Days in May (Harper & Row. $4.95.).* They do have as epigraph to the book an excerpt from President

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Eisenhower's farewell address of January 17, 1961, about the dangers of a misuse of power by the military-industrial complex. What does in effect, however, serve as a preface to *Seven Days* is a recent article by Knebel and Bailey in *Look*, "Military Control: Can It Happen Here?" There are ominous references in the article to those who believe that the United States is already "the warfare state, ripening for military take-over." Can it happen here? "Thoughtful men find no clear answer." Yet *Seven Days in May*, "pegged," as *Look's* introductory note to the article has it, "to the rush of today's headlines," is all about how close military take-over of the government can come.

Thus *Fail-Safe* and *Seven Days* come to be discussed not as fiction, as the Novel of Terror, but of the Novel as Tract. In that respect, the novel can be said to have come full circle. Eighteenth-century men read *Robinson Crusoe* not because it was fiction but because it was true. Defoe had all "the facts" to prove his story was true, all the thousand details of Crusoe's everyday activities. Even when Defoe was succeeded by greater artists like Richardson and Fielding, aesthetic considerations in novel reading were wholly subordinated to the moral concerns of how to live and get along. People no more read for pleasure in the eighteenth century than, as Walter Kerr has recently reminded us, they do today. The "facts" in *Fail-Safe* and *Seven Days* are the facts people ought to know in order to stay alive or to preserve their political liberties.

BUT WHAT if what Messrs. Burdick, Wheeler, Knebel and Bailey want the people to know isn't true? "Thoughtful men find no clear answers" says the *Look* article. But thoughtful men like Sidney Hook, in *The New Leader*, and Jack Wilson, in *The New Republic*, have clear answers concerning the kind of pernicious nonsense they think *Fail-Safe* is. So do experts like S. L. A. Marshall, in *The New Republic*, and David T. Bazelon in *Commentary* have clear answers about "the palpable dangers" Knebel and Bailey think they see. Mr. Bazelon was reviewing Fred Cook's *The Warfare State*, but what he has to say is equally applicable to *Seven Days*. Moreover, Mr. Bazelon, like Mr. Hook, faces up to the larger question posed by popular writing of this kind in America, to the irresponsibility of exaggerating, in Mr. Hook's words, "the risks involved in the defense of freedom to a degree that dwarfs in the minds of readers and viewers the much greater and more immediate danger confronting a free and peaceful world."

If popular writers have a sense of mission they would do well to ruminate upon the eloquent quotation from Matthew Arnold that Irving Kristol inserts in a *New Leader* article. Arnold wrote that "the failure to mind whatsoever things are elevated must impair with an inexorable fatality the life of a nation," and that if this failure is real in America and "should grow into a disease . . . then the life of even these great United States must inevitably suffer and be impaired more and more, until it perish." If popular writers, that is, can inspire us to mind whatsoever things are elevated, we shall be grateful and the spiritual tone of the nation will be raised. At the same time, let it be noted that nothing elevated can come from bad novels, particularly from bad novels that purport to be the truth. Better read than unread. Agreed. But not better read in the kind of overkill tale Mr. Lerner says he means to go on reading "until we either lick the problem or are overtaken by our failure."

To Padraig, Newborn

Marchtossed, darkdowned son—
more than myself and beyond
my father's needle eye
I see in you—accuser friend,
forgiving enemy—
each passerby;

see everyone—
beggar, poet; the hard
and fast tycoon,
boor, chancer, Jew dejected;
poor hopeless soak, another
character and card,
buffoon;

or possibly lay-brother,
cardinal maybe,
or even Pope
in smoke elected.
And in your lolling head I see
at once both lawyer wrangling
and criminal rejected
dangling
on a rope;

or, sent to mend the sick,
some dedicated;
saint in ecstacy
or crazy-gazing lunatic;

and, if some part of me,
yet something of her womanhood
who stands where Mary stood
and waited,
sword in heart,
who, seeing you the thief on either side,
sees more, sees you to be
in these a part
of the still Crucified.

CYRIL CUSACK

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THE STAGE

See America Next

IN ANY discussion of the state of American theater the question of decentralization is bound to arise. Like belief in the open stage, the idea of decentralization functions as a liberating notion for many persons concerned about drama in the U.S. It is thought that if the concentration of theatrical activity in New York could be broken and some of the released energy dispersed throughout the country, if local theater and its potential audience could be encouraged, we would be on our way to health.

It was with an eye to examining these possibilities that the Rockefeller Foundation recently awarded grants to several drama critics, of which I am one, to enable us to travel around the country visiting theaters and writing about what we see. I have just returned from my first venture outside the American theatrical womb (the grant generously allows us to travel when and where we wish) and although my sojourn in the Mid-West gave me no sort of definitive illumination, it did provide me with some preliminary observations.

The first is that a good deal of interesting and even adventurous work is being done outside New York, although in none of the cities I visited was it the work of new or previously unrecognized playwrights. The second is that in almost all cases the level of technical achievement, of acting, directing and staging, was considerably below the minimum standards one must insist upon if there is to be any real ground for optimism. I shall give only the sketchiest initial report here, since my space is limited this week.

In Detroit I saw a production of "The Master Builder," that towering work of Ibsen's final period whose last production in New York is outside the range of my memory. Unfortunately, it was so badly performed (Solness was acted by David Atkinson, an import from the off-Broadway musical scene who wishes to go straight but has not yet the wherewithal, and Hilde by a young woman described in the program as a model and actress, whose first profession was heavily in ascendancy) and so sluggishly directed that the virtue of this Vanguard Theatre enterprise was nearly all allowed to drain away.

I also saw an inept production of Tennessee Williams' crab little one-acter, "Hello From Bertha," together with a much more competent but still unsatisfying "Zoo Story." This was at the Stables Club, a cellar affair run on a shoestring (the night I was there the audience numbered eleven) which is probably quite representative of the earnest, rough, embattled kind of Little Theater activity going on in dozens of communities.

At Cleveland's Karamu Playhouse I had to sit through a coarse revival of Ossie Davis' "Purlie Victorious," which I disliked on Broadway, but was partly appeased by the same theater's "Androcles and the Lion." The Karamu's productions employ whites and Negroes interchangeably, so it was rather startling to see Androcles played by a dark-skinned performer and Caesar surrounded by a magnificent guard of bronzed centurions. This was extremely unpolished and disorganized Shaw, but it was robust and a good deal of fun.

Finally, at Chicago's Goodman Theatre I was present at the opening night of Ionesco's "The Lesson" and Ghelderode's "Christopher C." The former was performed with force and clarity on an impressive set, but was eventually destroyed by some inexcusable cutting which introduced gaping holes in its tight texture of murderous wit and inescapable anxiety. The latter, presented for the first time in America as far as I know, was also inventively staged but indifferently performed. I shall say more about it and about Chicago's flourishing cafe theaters later.

RICHARD GILMAN

THE SCREEN

The Dogs of War Again

THE enduring popularity of war films continues to baffle me—but the fact remains that they do well at the box office, and, needless to say, that appeals to the film makers. Hollywood has turned out its full quota. And now two new arrivals from abroad pursue the same subject. From Italy has come "The Four Days of Naples." While this does not have the impact of Rossellini's "Open City" with which it is being compared, it is still an impressive war movie.

Directed by Nanni Loy, who also had a hand in the original story and screenplay with four other writers, "The Four Days of Naples" refers to the period from Sept. 28th to Oct. 1st, 1943, when the Neapolitans, finally rising against the Germans who had taken over their city, drive out their former allies. The film actually starts, however, on Sept. 8th when a procession in honor of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin is interrupted by air raid sirens, and the people of this already devastated Naples flee in panic. But later that same day, fright and panic turn to jubilation when the radios announce that the Italians have signed an armistice with the Allies.

Director Loy's cameras catch the gloom of the German officers and the celebration of the Neapolitans as they pour into the streets and shout with joy that the war is over. Then the camera concentrates on one young Italian sailor who gleefully greets a drunken German soldier, and the two of them ride off crazily and happily on the sailor's bicycle. When they stop, exhausted from their crazy ride, German officers pass them, and put an

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end to their revels, shouting to the soldier: "What are you doing, stupid, the Italians have attacked us!"

This well-directed episode ends in horror. The soldier and the sailor are no longer friends. The Germans efficiently take over Naples and the sailor is shot in a public execution in a large square.

From then on all is confusion. The Italians are not sure what they're supposed to do about their former allies, while the German Occupation Forces are certain that the Italians are now the enemy. The Germans seize the food, drive the Neapolitans who live along the coast into the interior and herd all the men they can get into compounds before sending them to labor camps.

Again and again director Loy uses the technique of the earlier sailor-soldier episode to show the cruelty of the Germans and the suffering of the Italians. We follow a mother with her brood of kids, and after the Italian revolt starts on Sept. 28th, the camera picks up the same people in various terrifying wartime situations: a group of boys from a reformatory fighting like veterans, a group of students led by an inept professor until an Italian captain suddenly appears from nowhere and guides these eager fighters, and other groups we begin to recognize as the camera returns to their progress or defeats.

Goffredo Lombardo has given his lengthy film a good production. No one is starred, because the cast is very large and keeps changing with the changing locales as the fighting comes and goes in the various parts of the city. Director Loy, using a neo-realist technique, has handled this large cast well. No doubt the determined but confused people of Naples are the heroes of the film, but I found myself getting somewhat tired of them and of some of the repetitious story's clichés.

"The Four Days of Naples" is a curious mixture of fact and fiction and has started quite a bit of controversy abroad. The Germans say the film slanders their army. Some Italian Partisans say the German atrocities were worse than those shown in the movie. Some Italian Right-Wingers say that the Neapolitans weren't actually half as heroic as the film makes them and that the Germans were already evacuating Naples when the Italian uprising started. Perhaps all the claims are true. In any case, the Neapolitan revolt did aid the Allied advance; and the film, for anyone who has the patience to stay with all its fighting and confusion, does successfully convey again the horror and waste of war.

I'm not exactly sure what the French import, "The Elusive Corporal" is trying to prove. If Jean Renoir had made his film ten or, better yet, twenty years ago, I could have accepted it as a hymn of praise to men who cannot stand imprisonment and whose sole aim is to fight for freedom.

The story, set mainly in a German P.O.W. camp in France, is concerned with a group of French prisoners, some of whom spend all their time and energy in escaping. One in particular, amusingly played by Jean-Pierre Cassel, tries again and again—until finally victory, at least in a small way, is his.

As a group, however, the men are not very interesting. They're supposed to be a cross-section, with an insurance agent, a farmer, a waiter, an electrician, etc., but what they say and do is rather dull. Except for Cassel as the elusive corporal whose methods are ingenious, they become tiresome. It is hard, in fact, to believe that Jean Renoir, who gave us such outstanding movies as "The Grand Illusion," "The Rules of the Game," and in the United States, "The Southerner," and later the very sensitive "The River," made this colorless picture that relies on clichés and occasional vulgar language to spice up its routine story. Perhaps he's saying not all war films are inspiring. PHILIP T. HARTUNG

CORRESPONDENCE

Aid to Tito

Ann Arbor, Mich

TO THE EDITORS: In an article in your Jan. 11 issue Matthew Mestrovic states that "The yearly U.S. grants [of foreign aid] constituted over half of Yugoslavia's annual budgets." This is not correct, as may be illustrated from statistics available for the years 1958-60.

In this three-year period U.S. aid to Yugoslavia totaled approximately $380 million. During the same three-year period, Yugoslav budget expenditures (Federal government only) totaled 1,130 billion dinars which, if converted into dollars at the present unitary exchange rate of 750 dinars=$1, would total $1.5 billion. On this basis, U.S. assistance in this fairly representative period was approximately 25% of federal budget expenditures. (The U.S. totals are for fiscal years and the Yugoslav ones for calendar years.)

Use of the 750 rate in fact overstates the percentage since in the 1958-60 period a multiple rate system was in effect, and that part of U.S. dollar aid reimbursable in local currency was paid for in dinars at rates substantially lower than 750. WILLIAM D. BRODERICK

The Author Replies

New York, N.Y

TO THE EDITORS: My reference to the magnitude of U.S. economic and military assistance to Tito's government was derived from a well-documented study written by Dr. Charles Zalar for a Subcommittee on the Judiciary of the U.S. Senate. The 387 page study was published in 1961 by the U.S. Government Printing Office.

On page 294, Dr. Zalar makes the following comment: "In September 1961, it was reported that the

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sum total of United States economic aid for Yugoslavia since 1950 amounted to 1,500 million, and that United States military aid totaled about one billion dollars since 1949. UNRRA's aid to Yugoslavia totaled $435 million. About half a billion dollars in gifts from non-governmental, CARE and other charitable organizations, and in loans from international banks and the British and French governments should be added to the above-mentioned sums. Consequently, during the entire post-war period, Tito's Yugoslavia has received a yearly handout of approximately $200-250 million, representing one-half to two-thirds of her annual budget."

Mr. Broderick feels that the official rate of exchange of 750 dinars to the dollar instituted, I believe, in 1961, overstates the magnitude of foreign aid given previously, when Yugoslavia maintained multiple rates of exchange of 300, 400, and 600 dinars to the dollar. I disagree with him on this, since Yugoslavs traveling abroad and even the Yugoslav government are willing to pay as much as 1,300 dinars to purchase dollars in Switzerland, Italy, and elsewhere. Dr. Zalar puts it thus, "the rate which is formed on the basis of supply and demand of the dinar on foreign markets . . . fluctuates between 900 and 1,300 dinars for 1 United States dollar."

On top of all the aforementioned economic and military aid the U.S. government "sold" Tito in recent years hundreds of jet fighters and trainers at a fraction of their cost to the American taxpayer. Reports of these secret sales were first published in 1961 and sparked a storm of public and Congressional protest. Many people found it hard to understand why Washington "sold" Tito hundreds of planes at a time when Soviet-Yugoslav relations were becoming ever more cordial. Surely Yugoslavia is no longer in danger of Soviet military aggression as it might have been in, say, 1949, immediately after the Tito-Stalin break.

The main point at issue here is that despite massive foreign assistance the Yugoslav Communists have been unable to construct a viable economy. Proof of this failure came in 1962 when Yugoslav industry and agriculture were beset by a grave and general crisis. I think that this goes to show that what Yugoslavia needs in order to insure for its people a decent standard of living is not a permanent system of foreign aid but a reconstruction of her economy. Also Yugoslavia should seek membership or at least association with the European Economic Community. MATTHEW M. MESTROVIC

"A Protestant Viewpoint"

Iowa City, Iowa

TO THE EDITORS: As a Protestant who is a regular reader of The Commonweal I was deeply disappointed by a rather unirenic innuendo which mars Robert McAfee Brown's first regular column [Jan. 4]. Surely no man today can claim to be truly ecumenical and at the same time parenthetically demote those Protestants represented by the magazine, *Christianity Today*. And, although I would hesitate to suggest that the intellectual outlook of the *American Ecclesiastical Review* is identical to that of *Christianity Today*, I would also insist that no one is truly ecumenical who dismisses that group of Catholics (and nothing within my experience suggests that it is numerically insignificant) represented by the *American Ecclesiastical Review*.

If this first article by Brown is to be representative of future articles, I can only regret that The Commonweal is to be subjected to such a parochial brand of "ecumenicity." If your Protestant columnist is to fulfill his stated promise, "to interpret to Catholic readers certain things that are happening in the Protestant world," he cannot refer to *Christianity Today* so concessively, although he may not agree with its outlook.

As one who *is* sympathetic with the outlook of *Christianity Today*, I can honestly say that there are many among its readers who have a genuine concern for true ecumenicity. In fact, I would dare to say that if *they* were writing Dr. Brown's column for you, they would not be quite so apt to wear the theological blinders which he unfortunately seems to feel he must include in his "Protestant" attire.

I am deeply pleased that you have been willing to open your pages to a Protestant, and I only hope that some Protestant journal will soon return the favor. But I am sorry that your columnist seems to be insufficiently catholic to include the major voice of America's many evangelical Protestants at least on a par with the two other Protestant journals to which he refers.

LESLIE R. KEYLOCK

The Author Replies

Stanford, Cal.

TO THE EDITORS: When one thinks of ecumenically involved journals, I do not imagine one thinks *first* of either *The American Ecclesiastical Review* or *Christianity Today*. The level and intensity of ecumenical concern in these (and, indeed, many other journals that could have been cited) has been of a different order from that of the journals to which primary attention was called. A number of Catholics, for example, were deeply pained by the tone of Addison Leitch's comments on the Vatican Council in a recent issue of *Christianity Today*. If, in disparaging that tone, I give the impression of having succumbed to it myself, I certainly stand under equal condemnation. Actually the point of my parenthesis was to include *The American Ecclesiastical Review* and *Christianity Today* in the ecumenical conversation. Demotion by typography was not my intent. ROBERT MCAFEE BROWN

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After One Hundred Years: What?

The Emancipation Proclamation. By John Hope Franklin. Doubleday. $3.50.

by Howard N. Meyer

THE persistence of misrepresentation concerning the role of the Negro in our history is partially explained in the terms used by James Baldwin recently, "We have lied about something so long that everyone has come to believe it."

History as it has been outlined in the typical syllabus and text has served to aid the cause of segregation: by inducing acceptance of the status quo in race relations by the young white, or by producing apathy toward efforts to change it; by helping to give the young Negro feelings of inferiority, and hence of submissiveness; and by depriving him of pride in his heritage and a sense of continuity with his past. The re-examination launched early in this century by W.E.B. Du Bois and Carter G. Woodson in the context of the Negro's own movement to complete his liberation has produced a number of Negro scholars whose efforts have combated the second evil. Those who act for interracial justice should consider the importance of the lesson of Negro History Week for white students and their parents.

Professor John Hope Franklin, head of the history department at Brooklyn College, has produced a work of scholarship that is lucid and attractive to the general reader. With self-restraint and detachment, he has more or less successfully abstracted and told the story of the Emancipation Proclamation. There are enough misconceptions about that single great document to justify his attempt to separate its genesis and its content from its indispensable predecessor, the abolitionist movement, from the Civil War itself, and from the bitter aftermath.

Within its brief span the book tells well the story of the decision to write, the writing, and the immediate consequences of a paper that enabled Lincoln to keep a pledge made thirty years before: "If I ever get a chance to hit that thing, I'll hit it hard." The author gives appropriate attention to the part played by Negro leaders who helped influence its timing and the Proclamation's reciprocal role in recruiting the Negro soldiers who helped achieve its aim. Without directly suggesting, or even hinting at its contemporary significance, the author presents the ironic picture of partisan political loss at home, and massive diplomatic gain abroad, that was the consequence of Lincoln's courage and wisdom in going to the verge of executive power to begin the liberation that needed even greater executive boldness to complete.

A recently launched nationally syndicated columnist—not yet appearing in the N. Y. area—greeted his readers with more historical errors in one place than one is accustomed to seeing. Mr. Max Freedman, a Canadian who had been covering the U. S. beat for the Manchester *Guardian*, devoted his domestic debut to the Proclamation. Our own history books must be credited for causing him to accept the image of the Negro as history's helpless pawn and to state, contrary to the record, that there was an "almost total absence of Negro leaders" in the national pre-emancipation debate, and to characterize the Negro, falsely, as "the absentee client."

Less understandable and equally unforgivable is the remark that the Proclamation was given a "more generous meaning" by later generations than "its *authors* either conceived or intended." Most Lincoln biographies not only give the President the credit for sole authorship, but show, as Prof. Franklin does, that Lincoln knew very well the dimensions of the freedom on which he invoked the "considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of almighty God."

By coincidence there has just been reissued in paperback Professor Franklin's *Reconstruction: After the Civil War* which deals effectively and judiciously with the mythology of the "great alibi" for Southern racial attitudes. Mr. Freedman swallows the alibi whole, a fact that no doubt explains his conclusion, one he shares with many American products of U. S. history-teaching, that those who in 1963 seek "swift compliance" with the school desegregation decision are too "extreme."

Ambassador Smith's Cuban Report

The Fourth Floor. By Earl E. T. Smith. Random House. $5.

by Daniel M. Friedenberg

IN THE days of decline of Fulgencio Batista, dictator of Cuba, the Eisenhower administration sent Earl E. T. Smith as its new ambassador to that unhappy island. Mr. Smith of Newport, Rhode Island, Taft School and Yale University, financier and Member of the New York Stock Exchange for more than thirty years, is a right-wing Republican. He was not the first choice of Secretary of State Dulles, who had trouble filling the post. He was, nevertheless, the worst choice.

The qualifications of Ambassador Smith consisted of ignorance of the Spanish language, ignorance of the Spanish mind, ignorance of specific Cuban conditions and malignancy toward all liberalism. He filled his post with the stuff of which he was made. Some of the results are apparent to us all; the rest history will dredge up as it has already done in the case of Sumner Welles and the advent of the Batista regime twenty-five years before.

The Fourth Floor, with its subtitle, "An Account of the Castro Communist Revolution," is the official report of Ambassador Smith. The title itself is taken from the fourth floor of the State Department, where the lower echelon or secondary officials who determine Latin American policy are housed. It was this core of dupes or proto-Communists, these men of the Fourth Floor, who destroyed Batista and brought in Fidel Castro, according to the direct charge of Ear

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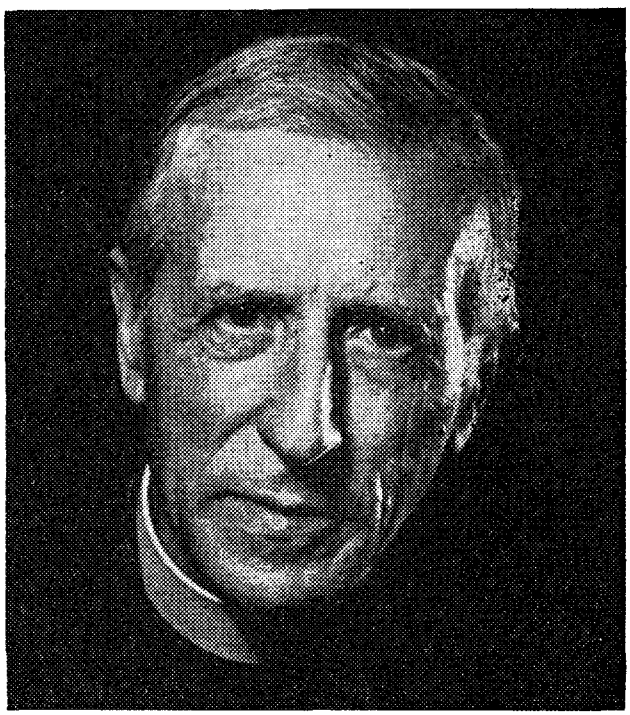
Smith. The Fourth Floor is a nest of traitors and should be cleansed, else we are doomed, concludes the author.

It is a measure of the growing sophistication of the American people and its elected representatives that these charges are viewed as tommyrot. All Mr. Smith has "proved," and he has striven mightily, is that the State Department knew Batista was finished and did not believe Castro was a Communist. To be aware that Batista was collapsing required the intellectual level of a cretin. And if Mr. Smith was certain Fidel Castro was a Communist in 1958, he missed his trade. He should have been a gypsy fortune teller. For in that year Messrs. Krushchev, Mao Tse-tung and Fidel Castro himself were not aware of what Earl Smith alone knew.

Actually, this knowledge came late even to the oracular ambassador. Mr. Smith at first viewed Castro as a mere bandit, a leader of desperadoes intent on wrecking law and order. His sketch of Camilo Cienfuegos is indicative. "After some delay, we were shown into a small room where I saw Major Cienfuegos for the first time. He was formerly a Cuban baseball player and a dishwasher in New York. The group reminded me of pictures I had seen of the Dillinger gang. They were dirty, unshaven, shoeless, and well-armed." Period. That's all. This was his image of "El Cristo" Cienfuegos, the most religious and saintly of the Cuban revolutionary leaders, a violent anti-Communist and a man who, some evidence indicates, was murdered because he would not submit to Communist control!

Perhaps the most revealing incident of the book is a story Smith tells about himself. In May 1958, to mark the Centennial of Theodore Roosevelt's birth, Earl Smith delivered to the high school graduating class at Guantanamo Base an address lauding Teddy Roosevelt. "I said that American students could emulate Theodore Roosevelt by developing his high sense of responsibility as an individual American citizen," he writes, unaware that he is recording for posterity his abysmally low grasp of the Latin American mind. It was

This man "like James Joyce or Sigmund Freud has become an inescapable intellectual presence of the age"—TIME



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by CHARLES E. RAVEN

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Teddy Roosevelt, after all, who eagerly pushed America toward war with Spain in order to take over the island of Cuba. It was Teddy Roosevelt who was associated with the Platt Amendment, which juridicially made Cuba a protectorate of the U.S. Finally, it was Teddy Roosevelt who, unable to buy canal rights from Colombia fomented a revolution by gold which broke off the province of Panama in order that the Americans could dig their canal.

To Cubans, President Theodore Roosevelt is the arch Yankee Imperialist. Yet it was this man whom Earl Smith was praising at Guantanamo, mere miles from the center of Fidel Castro's troops in the Sierra Maestra. Given the time and place, the American Ambassador showed a tact and knowledge comparable to an English Ambassador who would laud George III as the ideal Englishman in front of a convention of the Sons of the American Revolution.

The Fourth Floor performs one salutary function. It recreates the atmosphere of 1957 and 1958 so vividly that one regains some sympathy for the Cuban rebels, one is again reminded of the tremendous pressures flowing from the United States and pushing Fidel Castro towards Russia. We see Earl Smith, august proconsul to Cuba in the full Roman Imperial sense of the phrase, spinning his little plots to maintain Batista and destroy Castro, circling in the self-delusory nest of his own ego and vanity, pitifully out of touch with the Cuban reality, indeed out of touch with world reality.

In answering a magazine attack, this Sampson of Palm Beach roared "I do not care what this magazin says, but I cannot ignore any reflec tions upon my honesty. There ar two things I will not be called—on is a crook, the other is a fairy." Fa be it from this reviewer to reflect o Mr. Smith's honesty or sexual habits We leave those to the law and hi wife. As to his intelligence however that is a different matter. Histor need not judge since Earl Smitl kindly provides us with all the evi dence.

The Novel As a Precious Miniature

Children of Capricorn. By William Abrahams. Random House. $3.95.

by Martin Tucker

IF TIME passed were only time past, most of our futures would be quite different from what they are. This is the theme of many contemporary American novels and short stories. It is a theme which is no stranger to Western fiction but its incidence has become increasingly heavier in our time. The evidence o this theme, with heroes seeking t find their identity, or in some case to recover it, points up a trend fa more disturbing than simply th courtship of attention to one specia way of viewing life. The Americar novel is in danger of becoming a short story. Not only do the curren novels and stories treat the sam theme, but they often treat it in th same way and with the same tech

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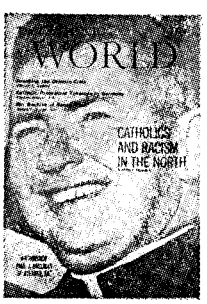

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ique. The number of pages is rapidly becoming the only difference between the two.

Long, diffuse novels by Norman Mailer, James Jones, and Vance Bourjaily still appear, and post-Victorian moralities keep flowing from the pens of Upton Sinclair and John O'Hara like so much water over the ridge of Literature. Yet while exceptions may prove the rule, profound examples define a trend. The good young novelists today treat fiction as one small unit, whether they present that unit under the guise of novel or short story.

Most contemporary novels deal with limited points of view, and with highly limited experiences. The family has replaced the world, and characters rarely act or interact; they discuss and react to what has already happened. The best American novels today deal with adolescence, but they are not the *bildungsroman* of earlier times. In the past, novels of boy's life (take Huck Finn or Holden Caulfield) expressed regret at the passing of youth, but they did not reveal any profound neurotic fear of what came after the salad course. In most of today's good novels the end of adolescence is the end of fun. Such a pervasive attitude, plus the tightening of the novel's point of view, has resulted in a situation whereby the novel has crafted itself into a miniature of what it once was.

These remarks are meant to define the limits of what is a beautifully rendered novel by William Abrahams. *Children of Capricorn* is an evocation of the past and of a Victorian mansion, more a shrine than a house, which has imposed its invidious mystique on the three people who live there. Capricorn was built by Charles Carlisle Field, a New England philosopher-poet, mainly on the funds supplied by his less literate, bourgeois wife. Its reputation and influence continue to haunt those who visit it—scholars a half-century later are making pilgrimages to it—but its heaviest grip is on Field's direct descendants. These include his daughter, his granddaughter Pauline, and his grandson Andrew.

Andrew is raised at Capricorn after his parents die and his Aunt Flora insists on his coming to live there as the last male heir to carry on the Field tradition. Thus Andrew and his cousin Pauline (Aunt Flora's daughter) grow up together in the Field house, but each reacts differently to the tradition heaped on him. One is bound and trapped by the past, while the other breaks free.

Pauline and Andrew are the main characters, but there are others whose lives intrude on the Capricorn hegemony. Mainly they are Pauline's acquaintances, for it is she who sees beyond the sterile curtain being drawn by Aunt Flora, the guardian of the Capricorn tradition. Andrew, however, remains complacent, and is drawn slowly into its web of isolation. He cannot admit the passion he feels for Pauline and yet is unable to deny it when she leaves him. At the opening of his manhood he has conclusively shut the door on life.

Capricorn, the house, is big, but the lives within it are small. Even the climactic scene when Pauline at last breaks free of Capricorn and all its limitations has an *enclosed* setting. A snowstorm has blanketed the countryside and Pauline and her

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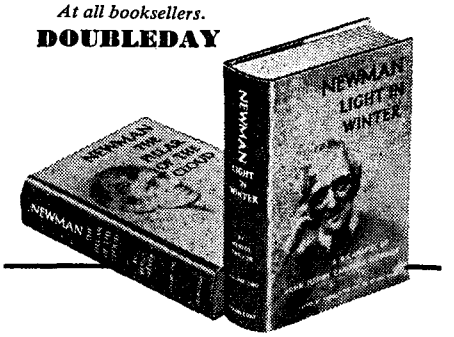

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lover Nick are snugly marooned in a wayside inn. All the trappings of sophistication envelop them — the French chef, the dry martinis, the fireplace, the large bedroom redolent of an age when it was part of a dynasty. Posing as man and wife, Nick and Pauline have settled into the room, and Pauline lifts the phone to call the one person who still holds her to the past.

Taken alone, *Children of Capricorn* is a lucid, subtle, tender story of adolescence. It is only when one remembers what the novel has shrunk to, what dimensions have been sacrificed for economy of form, that the reader may quibble. After all, Fitzgerald and James wrote of the rich and their destructive obsession with property values, yet neither of them became bound by the conventions of a style polished into a precious miniature.

An Exotic Tour

The Admiral and the Nuns. By Frank Tuohy. Scribners. $3.50.

by Michele Murray

THERE IS hardly a page of Frank Tuohy's collection of stories that does not bear the mark of an intelligent observer, a skilled writer. Yet the presence of these qualities only serves to point up that they alone are not enough to make a book memorable. Unfortunately, Mr. Tuohy does not provide very much more, so that his stories, pleasant and enjoyable to read, slip almost immediately out of mind.

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best Chekhovian manner, *is* incomplete, an exercise in cliff-hanging. The stories display the posture of a casual visitor, arriving on a luxury cruise, who stops over in one city or another for a few days. Just when he is becoming a bit more closely acquainted with the place, getting drawn into its alien pattern, the boat whistle calls him back and, untouched, he resumes shipboard life and watches the city fade from sight, feeling at most mild twinges of nostalgia.

The title story, which promises to be an interesting exploration of a young Englishwoman, who is the daughter of an admiral, the product of a convent school, who is married to a rough Polish workman and completely lost in a Brazilian community hacked out of the bush, simply evaporates: "She had not changed at all; she was one of those people whom experience leaves untouched. But she was durable. After all, she was an admiral's daughter. As for the nuns, I cannot decide whether they had given her the worst, or the best, education in the world."

The best story in the book, which is pendant to the title piece, is also long and also set in Brazil. "A Survivor in Salvador" tells of a hallucinated few days in the life of an elderly Polish nobleman who has come to the end of the line in the old Brazilian city of Salvador, where he is supposed to deliver a package of cocaine, earning a small fee in return. Reaching the contact only seconds before the police, he flees with the package but with no money and no knowledge of the language. How he survives, not only materially, but also in his estimate of himself as a man, makes a thoroughly satisfying story. Three or four more like it would have given body and particularity to what is now only another commonplace collection.

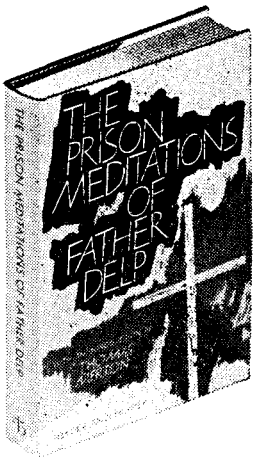
REVIEWERS

Howard N. Meyer has just edited a reissue of Thomas Wentworth Higginson's *Army Life in a Black Regiment.*

Daniel M. Friedenberg is a frequent contributor of articles and reviews.

Martin Tucker is a member of the faculty at Long Island University.

Michele Murray contributes reviews to the *Catholic Reporter* and the *Washington Post.*



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